

***Courtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) J. Sojak - The Correct Name for *Indocourtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) Bennet & Raizada**

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Pune - 411 001.

Abstract

Courtoisia cyperoides (Roxb.) J. Sojak is the correct name for *Indocourtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) Bennet & Raizada.

Raizada and Bennet (1981) published a new name, *Indocourtoisia* Bennet & Raizada for *Courtoisia* Nees belonging to the family *Cyperaceae*, when the latter was found to be a later homonym of *Courtoisia* Marchand, a Lichen genus. Some other names viz., *Courtoisia* J. Sojak (1979) and *Pseudomariscus* Rauchert (1982) were also proposed for this sedge genus. Among these new names proposed, *Courtoisia* Sojak (1979) should get priority as it is the earliest one. It may also be noted that Vorster (1986) proposed to conserve the name *Courtoisia* Nees against *Courtoisia* Marchand. But this proposal was not accepted at the nomenclatural sessions during the 14th International Botanical Congress held in 1987 at Berlin and recommended to use the first replacement name *Courtoisia* Sojak (Brummitt, 1989). One more name *Courtoisia* H.G.L. Reichenbach, Handb. 194 (1837) was published, under the family Polemoniaceae which becomes a later homonym to both *Courtoisia* Marchand and *Courtoisia* Nees.

There are two species of this genus distributed in Tropical Africa, Madagascar and Indian subcontinent. In India only one species is occurring which goes under the name *Courtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) Nees since long, as evidenced in the classic works of Clarke (1893), Cooke (1908), Fischer (1931) and others. Since the publication of the name *Indocourtoisia* almost all the Indian authors accepted the combination *Indocourtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) Bennet & Raizada as the correct name for the Indian species and this nomenclature appears in the latest Floras. Since *Courtoisia* J. Sojak is the correct generic name according to the rules of priority, this species should be *Courtoisia cyperoides* (Roxb.) J. Sojak. The African species is *Courtoisia assimilis* (Steudel) P. Maquet.

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Originally the Indian species was described under *Kyllinga* Rottb. as *K. cyperoides* Roxb. and at times treated under the genus *Cyperus* L. *sensu lato* as *C. pseudokyllingoides* Kuentz. and under *Mariscus* Vahl as *M. cyperoides* (Roxb.) Dietrich. But there is sufficient reason to segregate the genus *Courtoisia* Sojak from the other genera mentioned above, though there are some external similarities among these. It differs from *Kyllinga* Rottb. by the annual habit, umbellate inflorescence, tristigmatic style and trigonous nut, whereas in *Kyllinga* Rottb. plants are perennials, inflorescence capitate or of a single spike, style distigmatic and nut bilaterally flattened. It can be differentiated from *Cyperus sensu stricto* by the deciduous nature of the spikelets which is also characteristic of the genus *Mariscus* Vahl. But it can be separated from *Mariscus* by the annual habit and winged keel of the glumes. In *Mariscus* most species are perennials and keel of the glumes never winged. There are anatomical differences also between these genera (Vorster, 1986).

Acknowledgements

VPP is thankful to Shri M.K. Vasudeva Rao, Deputy Director, Botanical Survey of India, Western Circle, Pune, for encouragement and facilities.

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